The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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FOR VICTORY BUY UNITED STATES WAR BONDS AND STAMPS
Thru Payroll Savings

WHOLE NO. 1794 | WILLIAM GREEN, President | WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 1945 | GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer | VOL. 35, NO. 35

Nation's Workers Praised In Labor Day Celebrations

Holiday Marked By Serious Resolve To Build For Future Security

For Labor Day Editions

Washington, D. C.—Labor Day came back into its own this year as a real national holiday.

Once again, the American people took time out from their regular daily grind to have a little fun and to give grateful recognition to the magnificent wartime achievements of the nation's workers.

The only cloud on the national horizon, now that peace has returned, was the looming problems of the future and the need for drastic action to prevent widespread unemployment and another economic tailspin.

But the holiday-making American people were in a predominantly confident mood. President Truman sounded the keynote for the country when he said in his Labor Day message:

"The tasks ahead are great and the opportunities are equally great. Your government is determined to meet those tasks and to fulfill those opportunities. Our men and women did not falter in the task of saving freedom. They will not falter now in the task of making freedom secure."

Expressing the views of the nation's workers, AFL President William Green said:

"We have won a double victory—a military victory over powerful enemies and a spiritual triumph over despotism and dictatorship. Now it is our supreme purpose to attain the fruits of victory for which we have paid so dearly."

The Labor Day celebrations held by AFL organizations in many cities of the nation were sobered by the realization of the grief which war had brought to many American homes. Memory of the thousands of boys who will never come back from the fighting fronts and of the thousands of workers who lost their lives in the factories while labor won the battle of production, remained fresh in all hearts.

In token of the solemn debt which the nation owes to these war heroes and can never be repaid, President Green delivered his annual Labor Day address from the cemetery where Peter J. McGuire, father of Labor Day, lies buried near Camden, N. J. The memorial services, sponsored by the Camden Central Labor Union, stressed the fact that the nation must establish "a way of life which will bring happiness and security to humanity in the future."

While labor paid tribute to the fighting heroes of the war, leaders of the government and the armed forces from President Truman down took advantage of the occasion to return the compliment to the nation's loyal workers.

He declared the world will always remember the services of the workers of all free nations "who produced the vast equipment with which victory was won."

Undersecretary of War Robert P. Patterson said:

"For their contribution toward victory, the men and women in our war industries deserve the highest commendation. I want to extend my thanks and congratulations to every one of them."

Gen. H. H. (Hap) Arnold, chief of the Army Air Forces, bestowed special praise on aircraft workers, Navy Department bigwigs tossed bouquets at the shipyard workers and so on, all down the line.

But pleased as they were by all these encomiums, the workers were more than a little disturbed by an undercurrent of uncertainty as to what is going to happen to their jobs.

Led by President Green, AFL speakers at Labor Day meetings emphasized the urgent need of speeding up reconversion, adopting legislation to meet human needs during reconversion and expanding peacetime production to a point which would provide jobs for all and keep the American people supplied with the material comforts which modern civilization affords.

LABOR DAY MESSAGE

The following statement of the President is for release in papers appearing on the streets not earlier than 8 p.m., E.W.T., Saturday, September 1, 1945:

PLEASE SAFEGUARD AGAINST PREMATURE RELEASE

By HARRY S. TRUMAN
President of the United States

Six years ago the workers of the United States, and of the world, awoke to a Labor Day in a world at war. The democracies of Western Europe had just accepted the challenge of totalitarianism. We in the United States had two years of grace, but the issue was squarely joined at that hour, as we now know. There was to be no peace until tyranny had been outlawed.

Today we stand on the threshold of a new world. We must do our part in making this world what it should be—a world in which the bigotries of race and class and creed shall not be permitted to warp the souls of men.

We enter upon an era of great problems, but to live is to face problems. Our men and women did not falter in the task of saving freedom. They will not falter now in the task of making freedom secure. And high in the ranks of those men and women, as a grateful world will always remember, are the workers of all free nations who produced the vast equipment with which victory was won.

The tasks ahead are great, and the opportunities are equally great. Your government is determined to meet those tasks and fulfill those opportunities.

We recognize the importance and dignity of labor, and we recognize the right of every American citizen to a wage which will permit him and his dependents to maintain a decent standard of living.

For Labor Day Editions

Labor Helping U. S. Win The Peace, Says Wagner In Holiday Greeting

By ROBERT F. WAGNER
U. S. Senator from New York

We celebrate Labor Day this year with the happy knowledge that complete victory over the enemies of freedom has been achieved.

American labor may well be proud of the role it has played in the smashing successes of the road to victory. It established a record of production that has never been equaled in human history. From the factories and workshops of America there poured forth an ever-mounting stream of planes, ships, tanks, guns and all the other supplies and implements of war without which victory would have been impossible. Industrial disputes were adjusted with the loss of only a fraction of one percent of the total working time, and this is a unique war record. The working men and women of America have demonstrated that free labor can out-produce slave labor and that democracy can be more productive and efficient than dictatorship. By these achievements, American labor has earned the respect and gratitude not only of the American people but of our allies all over the world.

Now that victory has been achieved on the production line and on the field of battle, we must move forward with equal vigor and singleness of purpose to win the peace at home and abroad. America, which served so well as the arsenal of democratic arms, has an equally vital role as the arsenal of democratic ideals. The people's sacrifice in war implies and demands a people's peace, one that will guarantee to all nations freedom from aggression in a world of good neighbors, building toward greater goals of social justice, security and human rights. To help assure that kind of world, the voice and aspirations of labor should be heard at the peace table, as well as in planning for full post-war employment and prosperity at home.

The compelling demands of the war effort opened our eyes to the enormous capacity of our resources and our manpower. We have seen what America can accomplish when it organizes its resources effectively. We know that if we mobilize the strength of our nation in peace as we have in war we can eliminate poverty and maintain higher standards of living than ever before. To translate these potentialities into a living reality, we must have comprehensive postwar planning and an effective realistic program to achieve our purposes. Organized labor, which stood in the forefront of the fight for an effective war program, stands equally in the forefront of the fight for full employment, adequate housing for all American families, improved social security and health insurance and for all other measures required for an effective postwar program. We must unite in our determination to continue the fight until victory has been won, until the foundations for the postwar security, health and welfare of our people have been firmly established.

LABOR DAY GREETINGS

By HENRY A. WALLACE
Secretary of Commerce

Labor Day of 1945 holds a double significance: It marks the triumphant completion of the greatest production task in the world's history and it finds the labor movement sharing with every other part of our population the challenge of shaping and preserving the peace that we have won.

The entire nation takes occasion this Labor Day to honor the men and women whose work on the industrial front produced the ships and planes and munitions without which this war could not have been won. The tribute will be rightly deserved, for it has been hard won.

As it accepts this honor, however, I know that labor will not forget that victory in itself was not the final goal. We sought the victory so that we could go on and build a peace that would not fail, a peace of justice and security and freedom.

For Labor Day Editions

AFL Workers Gave Million For Relief, Plan To Expand Humane Program

New York City.—On this Labor Day the 6-year record of the AFL's Labor League for Human Rights stands forth as one of patriotic service to the nation and a credit to the generosity of the seven million members of the American Federation of Labor. Even more ambitious plans are now being made for the league's postwar activities.

The Labor League was formed in 1938 by leaders of the AFL to give expression to the labor movement's opposition to the barbarism and aggression of the Axis. From its beginning it opposed appeasement, intolerance and dictatorship.

Soon after the outbreak of World War II, the Labor League undertook its first major relief project. Organized labor volunteered to assist England's harassed workers and the American Labor Committee to Aid British Labor was formed with the Labor League helping to raise the AFL's share of $350,000. This action strongly demonstrated American labor's initial attitude toward the war.

Labor's effective support of war relief campaigns was quickly recognized by the Community War Chests and the American Red Cross. In 1942 agreements were entered into with these organizations. The National War Fund gave similar recognition in 1943. These agreements stipulated that labor would assist in fund-raising drives and that the National War Fund in turn would undertake the support of labor's own War Relief Program.

Labor's War Relief Program has a brilliant record behind it. The future forecasts even greater achievements. Past activities include:

Belgium: Emergency cash relief to aid victims of the German occupation; also material aid.

British Isles: Rehabilitation centers for disabled war workers, nurses' rest homes, community centers for workers in bombed areas, hostel clubs for women agricultural workers.

Czechoslovakia: Relief and rescue work for victims of Axis occupation. Mobile X-ray clinics for examining workers in factories.

China: Workers' welfare centers and clinics, emergency rescue and relief of workers from territory occupied by Japanese armies.

France: Cash relief for families of persons killed by the Nazis.

Holland: Relief for victims of Axis occupation.

India: Vitamins, sulfa drugs, and evaporated milk for persons weakened by famine; also eighty microscopes for use in diagnosis.

Italy: Material aid—evaporated milk and other concentrated foods.

Luxembourg: Emergency cash relief for Nazi victims.

Norway: Relief for victims of Axis occupation.

Poland: Relief for victims of Axis occupation.

Russia: Purchase of material for warm garments.

The National War Fund has allocated $2,750,000 as the quota for Labor's War Relief Program for 1945-46.

SAY, LISTEN!

For the rest of this year, the AFL presents each Saturday evening at 6:45 P.M., EWT, over the nation-wide network of the American Broadcasting Company a radio news-magazine, featuring the latest news at home and abroad and special reports by expert commentators on important labor problems. This program is listed in the radio columns of your newspaper as "Labor-U.S.A." Our own subtitle for the program is "The American Federationist of the Air." Don't miss these bright, newsy broadcasts! Listen every Saturday night!

For Labor Day Editions

LABOR PRODUCED THE GOODS

By ROBERT P. PATTERSON
Undersecretary of War

It is highly fitting on this Labor Day to recognize officially the great contribution which the working men and women of America made toward the victory we have won. A year ago we were still engaged in a bitter struggle with two powerful and determined foes, but our military might had become so formidable that no nation could withstand its force. Our triumph was inevitable, but its speed was accelerated by the loyalty and devotion and plain hard work of the people here at home.

American workers were members of the great team which made possible our brilliant military successes. It was they who gave our fighting men the tremendous volume of supplies and equipment which crushed the enemy under its weight. For their contribution toward victory, the men and women in our war industries deserve the highest commendation. On this occasion, I want to extend my thanks and congratulations to every one of them.

Let us now dedicate ourselves to the task of welding a lasting peace, a peace which will guarantee that we shall never again have to go to war to defend our way of life. That is a job which vitally concerns every man and woman in America.

Building And Metal Trades Unions Move Swiftly To Protect Members

Washington, D. C.—Building and metal trades unions affiliated with the AFL moved swiftly to protect their members from the sudden onslaught of emergency peace conditions.

The AFL Building and Construction Trades Department obtained from the government a 90-day extension of the special wage adjustment procedure which has protected building trades workers during the war from inequities and maladjustments.

Another important step was revocation of the Presidential Executive Order on overtime pay, which will permit unions to restore their hard-won prewar conditions which were relinquished during the war emergency.

The temporary extension of the Wage Adjustment Board was recommended by resident members of the Building and Construction Trades Executive Council in order to clarify conditions which will have to be faced when the government lifts wage controls.

Further encouraging news came from the War Production Board which removed government restrictions on industrial reconstruction so that a huge, $4,500,000,000 building program necessitated by reconversion of manufacturing plants can be launched immediately.

The AFL Metal Trades Department held a two-day special conference of its Executive Council and representatives of affiliated International Unions, at the conclusion of which a committee, headed by President John P. Frey, went to the White House to confer with President Truman.

Mr. Frey said the committee urged wage increases for Navy Yard workers, whose hourly rate has been lifted by only eight cents since 1940. He said their present pay scales, with overtime cut down, are utterly inadequate to meet high living costs.

The committee also pointed out to the President that many metal trades collective bargaining contracts expire when the national war emergency is officially declared ended. The union leaders asked President Truman to give them advance notice of the coming official proclamation so that these contracts can be renegotiated and chaos avoided. Mr. Frey said the President indicated he considered this a justified request.

The Chief Executive also gave a favorable response to the committee's pleas for quick action on legislation to speed reconversion and to provide for human needs during the transition period.

AFL Demands Congress Act Promptly For Human Needs

Unemployed Being Pressed To Take Lower-Paid Jobs

Washington, D. C.—As reconversion unemployment grew progressively worse, pressure developed in many parts of the country to force disemployed workers to accept any new kind of jobs that turn up, even at much lower rates of pay than they formerly earned.

Reports from several states indicated that unemployment compensation agencies, backed by antilabor employers, were refusing to consider applications for relief as long as any open jobs are listed by the employment services.

This was considered by labor leaders as an underhanded attempt to break down organized labor's standards and as further proof of the need for federalizing the unemployment compensation system, as provided for in the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill.

Estimates of the total number of workers who have lost their jobs since the sudden wave of cancellation of war contracts were still based on fragmentary information, but the War Manpower Commission announced it will soon establish weekly surveys compiled from telegraphic reports from its agencies in all of the nation's industrial areas.

However, abundant proof was available that war workers are losing their jobs at a much faster rate than they can be reabsorbed in other industries, chiefly in the service trades, which until now have been suffering from manpower shortages. Offices of the U. S. Employment Service and State Unemployment Compensation Commissions were reported swamped with long lines of applicants in every section of the nation.

"Must" Program Is Indorsed By Truman; Labor-Industry Parley Speeded

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor served blunt notice on Congress that the nation's workers expect and demand immediate action on "must" legislation vital to protect human needs during reconversion.

AFL President William Green, taking cognizance of reports that some members of Congress wanted to extend their vacation on the plea that no measures were ready for their consideration, called on the lawmakers "to get back on the job no later than Sept. 5 and to proceed to act on this 'must' legislation with the utmost dispatch."

The list of urgent measures, which an AFL committee headed by Mr. Green took up with President Truman at a White House conference and which the President warmly endorsed, follows:

1—The President's own recommendations, incorporated in the Kilgore bill, for broadening the coverage of unemployment compensation and increasing state allowances with supplementary federal funds to provide payments of as much as $25 a week for at least 26 weeks in any one year.

2—The Murray-Wagner Full Employment bill, which would set up a federal job budget and commit the government to provide employment through useful and necessary public works if private industry does not meet the budget.

3—The Wagner Postwar Housing bill, which would create millions of new jobs through a 10-year program of home construction to be carried on almost entirely by private initiative.

4—The bill sponsored by a large number of Senators which would lift minimum wage levels immediately to 65 cents an hour and establish a 75-cent floor for hourly rates of pay in interstate industry at the end of 3 years.

5—The Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill, broadening the coverage of social security and expanding its services to the American people.

Meanwhile, Mr. Green took part in another White House conference designed to make plans for the proposed national labor-management meeting to establish cooperation and industrial peace in the postwar years ahead. He met with President Truman, Reconversion Director Snyder, Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach and representatives of the United States Chamber of Commerce, the CIO and the National Association of Manufacturers.

At the conclusion of the meeting Secretary Schwellenbach said that another conference would be held in his office on Sept. 5 to draft specific plans for the forthcoming sessions.

He said all parties agreed that the labor-management parleys should be held and that substantial results could be obtained by careful planning of the agenda and a cooperative attitude by the participants.

The Secretary of Labor added that President Truman had asked him and Secretary of Commerce Wallace to do everything in their power to make the labor-management sessions a success.

The President has told recent visitors that he wants to remove government controls from collective bargaining as soon as possible, now that peace is here. He was reported to have expressed the opinion that the National War Labor Board should wind up its pending cases and go out of business promptly. However, he feels that it is up to labor and industry to set up some substitute voluntary procedure in order to prevent the reconversion drive and the peacetime production program from getting snarled up with disputes.

FREE PAMPHLETS OFFERED BY JEWISH LABOR GROUP

New York City.—The Jewish Labor Committee, in the course of expanding its activities has just published an article by AFL President William Green in pamphlet form on the subject of racial and religious tolerance. Free copies of this pamphlet can be obtained by writing to Labor Reports, Room 406, 175 East Broadway, New York 2, N. Y.

CASKET WORKERS PUSH ANNUAL WAGE PLAN

Philadelphia.—The Upholsterers' International Union has moved toward establishment of a guaranteed annual wage in the nation's casket industry.

Sal B. Hoffman, International President of the union, in a letter to all casket manufacturers under agreement with UIU, proposed that they join the union in a survey to determine the economic basis and feasibility of a guaranteed annual wage in the manufacture of caskets.

Four More AFL Heroes Get D.S.C.

Washington, D. C.—Four more AFL members in uniform have been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for heroism in action against enemy forces. The War Department's accounts of their valor follow:

The daring and courage of T/Sgt. Raymond T. Kommer, member of Local 164, National Brotherhood of Operative Potters—AFL, Akron, Ohio, when he walked into a German machine gun nest and snatched the gun from the gunner's hand on December 25, 1944, earned him the Distinguished Service Cross, second highest Army award.

In the thick of mortar and machine gun fire, Kommer, a squad leader in the Ninth Army, ran ahead of his pinned-down squad toward German positions. When he came within an arm's length of the enemy, the German gunner stopped his firing for a moment. Quickly, Sgt. Kommer reached into the machine gun nest and pulled the weapon from the gunner's hands. His courageous act so demoralized the Germans that they immediately ran through their escape trenches.

Sergt. William J. Goodson, member of Local 186, Upholsterers' International Union—AFL, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for successfully leading the first American tank across the Rhine River.

As his tank battalion reached the railroad bridge at the Rhine on March 7, 1945, Goodson placed his tank in a commanding position and fired upon German gun emplacements on the opposite bank to cover the crossing of our forces. That night, despite the extreme darkness and heavy fire from 20mm and machine guns, he dismounted, and without knowing the strength of the bridge, led his tank across the span.

Alone, Pfc. Harry E. Hamilton, member of Local 235, Plumbers and Steamfitters' Union—AFL, Vancouver, Washington, killed nine Germans and stopped a counter-attack by thirty more with his automatic rifle. He received the Distinguished Service Cross for his heroic feat.

Several members of his company were stopped by machine gun fire on September 14, 1944, near Mount Calvi, Italy, as they attempted to outflank the Germans. Hamilton, with automatic rifle in hand, staged a one-man attack which drove the enemy back and enabled his comrades to advance.

Pfc. Wayne H. Brooks, penetrated enemy lines under heavy German fire in Mittelwihr, France, on December 13-14, 1944, and aided besieged, isolated units of the American Seventh Army to escape. In recognition of his extraordinary heroism, Brooks, a member of Local No. 1290, International Hod Carriers, Building and Common Laborers' Union, formerly employed by William S. Lozier, Inc., DeSoto, Kansas, has been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, second highest Army award.

Army To Send War Prisoners Home, Giving Their Jobs To Free Workers

Washington, D. C.—Requesting that the Secretary of Agriculture and the War Manpower Commission urge upon all industrial and agricultural employers of prisoner-of-war labor the need for immediate action to replace them with free labor, Undersecretary of War Robert P. Patterson wrote:

"It is the intention of the War Department to return to Europe at the earliest practical moment all German and Italian prisoners of war."

On the other hand, employes released by industrial cutbacks, and discharged military personnel, can receive great assistance from state and federal employment agencies and veterans' organizations which will guide them into agricultural and peacetime industrial jobs, the Undersecretary pointed out.

Of the 400,000 German and Italian POWs in this country, those who are employable have been working on military, naval, industrial and agricultural projects. More than 5,000 sick and wounded German and Italian prisoners of war have already been returned to their homelands since V-E Day; another 5,000 sick and wounded nonworkers are soon to go back.

Over 2,500 prisoners of war with coal mining experience will go back to Germany during August, to work in the German mines. 1,500 Italians will be repatriated during August, September and October.

The controlling factor in the return of war prisoners is the need for their labor in the United States, since the Commanding General, European theater, has indicated he can receive war prisoners as fast as they can be sent back. Transportation to Europe will be generally available until early in 1946. The War Manpower Commission declared in a recent statement that it favored prompt return of the prisoners to their homelands.

Notice to Labor Editors!

Three mats for your Labor Day editions will be mailed to you free of charge on Monday, Aug. 27, by the AFL Weekly News Service.

They include 1-column mats of AFL President William Green and Secretary-Treasurer George Meany and a 3-column mat depicting disemployed war workers crowding offices of the U. S. Employment Service, hunting new jobs.